

For Six Month Period Ending SEP 30 2006
(Insert date)

I - REGISTRANT

1. (a) Name of Registrant

(b) Registration No. 2052

Alpine Tourist Commission

(c) Business Address(es) of Registrant

c/o Switzerland Tourism

608 Fifth Avenue

New York NY 10020

2. Has there been a change in the information previously furnished in connection with the following:

(a) If an individual:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (1) Residence address | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (2) Citizenship | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (3) Occupation | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

(b) If an organization:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| (1) Name | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (2) Ownership or control | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (3) Branch offices | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

(c) Explain fully all changes, if any, indicated in items (a) and (b) above.

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IF THE REGISTRANT IS AN INDIVIDUAL, OMIT RESPONSE TO ITEMS 3, 4 AND 5(a).

3. If you have previously filed Exhibit C¹, state whether any changes therein have occurred during this 6 month reporting period.

Yes No

If yes, have you filed an amendment to the Exhibit C? Yes No

If no, please attach the required amendment.

¹ The Exhibit C, for which no printed form is provided, consists of a true copy of the charter, articles of incorporation, association, and by laws of a registrant that is an organization. (A waiver of the requirement to file an Exhibit C may be obtained for good cause upon written application to the Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC 20530.)

4. (a) Have any persons ceased acting as partners, officers, directors or similar officials of the registrant during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Position	Date connection ended
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(b) Have any persons become partners, officers, directors or similar officials during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Residence address	Citizenship	Position	Date assumed
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5. (a) Has any person named in item 4(b) rendered services directly in furtherance of the interests of any foreign principal? Yes No

If yes, identify each such person and describe his service.

(b) Have any employees or individuals, who have filed a short form registration statement, terminated their employment or connection with the registrant during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Position or connection	Date terminated
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(c) During this 6 month reporting period, has the registrant hired as employees or in any other capacity, any persons who rendered or will render services to the registrant directly in furtherance of the interests of any foreign principal(s) in other than a clerical or secretarial, or in a related or similar capacity? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name	Residence address	Citizenship	Position	Date assumed
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6. Have short form registration statements been filed by all of the persons named in Items 5(a) and 5(c) of the supplemental statement? Yes No

If no, list names of persons who have not filed the required statement.

II - FOREIGN PRINCIPAL

7. Has your connection with any foreign principal ended during this 6 month reporting period?

Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name of foreign principal

Date of termination

8. Have you acquired any new foreign principal² during this 6 month reporting period?

Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name and address of foreign principal

Date acquired

9. In addition to those named in Items 7 and 8, if any, list foreign principals² whom you continued to represent during the 6 month reporting period.

Alpine Tourist Commission
(Touristische Gemeinschaft der Alpenlaender)
Zurich/Switzerland

10. **EXHIBITS A AND B**

(a) Have you filed for each of the newly acquired foreign principals in Item 8 the following:

Exhibit A³ Yes No
Exhibit B⁴ Yes No

If no, please attach the required exhibit.

(b) Have there been any changes in the Exhibits A and B previously filed for any foreign principal whom you represented during the 6 month period? Yes No

If yes, have you filed an amendment to these exhibits? Yes No

If no, please attach the required amendment.

² The term "foreign principal" includes, in addition to those defined in Section 1(b) of the Act, an individual organization any of whose activities are directly or indirectly supervised, directed, controlled, financed, or subsidized in whole or in major part by a foreign government, foreign political party, foreign organization or foreign individual. (See Rule 100(a) (9).) A registrant who represents more than one foreign principal is required to list in the statements he files under the Act only those principals for whom he is not entitled to claim exemption under Section 3 of the Act. (See Rule 208.)

³ The Exhibit A, which is filed on Form CRM-157 (Formerly OBD-67), sets forth the information required to be disclosed concerning each foreign principal.

⁴ The Exhibit B, which is filed on Form CRM-155 (Formerly OBD-65), sets forth the information concerning the agreement or understanding between the registrant and the foreign principal.

III - ACTIVITIES

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11. During this 6 month reporting period, have you engaged in any activities for or rendered any services to any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, and 9 of this statement? Yes No

If yes, identify each such foreign principal and describe in full detail your activities and services:

we refer to separate sheet

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12. During this 6 month reporting period, have you on behalf of any foreign principal engaged in political activity⁵ as defined below? Yes No

If yes, identify each such foreign principal and describe in full detail all such political activity, indicating, among other things, the relations, interests and policies sought to be influenced and the means employed to achieve this purpose. If the registrant arranged, sponsored or delivered speeches, lectures or radio and TV broadcasts, give details as to dates and places of delivery, names of speakers and subject matter.

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13. In addition to the above described activities, if any, have you engaged in activity on your own behalf which benefits any or all of your foreign principals? Yes No

If yes, describe fully.

⁵ The term "political activities" means any activity that the person engaging in believes will, or that the person intends to, in any way influence any agency or official of the Government of the United States or any section of the public within the United States with reference to formulating, adopting or changing the domestic or foreign policies of the United States or with reference to the political or public interests, policies, or relations of a government of a foreign country or a foreign political party.

IV - FINANCIAL INFORMATION

14. (a) RECEIPTS - MONIES

During this 6 month reporting period, have you received from any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, and 9 of this statement, or from any other source, for or in the interests of any such foreign principal, any contributions, income or money either as compensation or otherwise? Yes No

If no, explain why.

If yes, set forth below in the required detail and separately for each foreign principal an account of such monies⁶

Date	From whom	Purpose	Amount
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we refer to separate sheet

Total

(b) RECEIPTS - FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN

During this 6 month reporting period, have you received, as part of a fund raising campaign⁷, any money on behalf of any foreign principal named in items 7, 8, and 9 of this statement? Yes No

If yes, have you filed an Exhibit D⁸ to your registration? Yes No

If yes, indicate the date the Exhibit D was filed. Date _____

(c) RECEIPTS - THINGS OF VALUE

During this 6 month reporting period, have you received any thing of value⁹ other than money from any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, and 9 of this statement, or from any other source, for or in the interests of any such foreign principal? Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name of foreign principal	Date received	Description of thing of value	Purpose
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^{6, 7} A registrant is required to file an Exhibit D if he collects or receives contributions, loans, money, or other things of value for a foreign principal, as part of a fund raising campaign. (See Rule 201(e).)

⁸ An Exhibit D, for which no printed form is provided, sets forth an account of money collected or received as a result of a fund raising campaign and transmitted for a foreign principal.

⁹ Things of value include but are not limited to gifts, interest free loans, expense free travel, favored stock purchases, exclusive rights, favored treatment over competitors, "kickbacks," and the like.

15. (a) **DISBURSEMENTS - MONIES**

During this 6 month reporting period, have you

(1) disbursed or expended monies in connection with activity on behalf of any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, and 9 of this statement? Yes No

(2) transmitted monies to any such foreign principal? Yes No

If no, explain in full detail why there were no disbursements made on behalf of any foreign principal.

If yes, set forth below in the required detail and separately for each foreign principal an account of such monies, including monies transmitted, if any, to each foreign principal.

Date	To whom	Purpose	Amount
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we refer to separate sheet

Total

(b) DISBURSEMENTS – THINGS OF VALUE

During this 6 month reporting period, have you disposed of anything of value¹⁰ other than money in furtherance of or in connection with activities on behalf of any foreign principal named in Items 7, 8, and 9 of this statement?

Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Date disposed	Name of person to whom given	On behalf of what foreign principal	Description of thing of value	Purpose
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(c) DISBURSEMENTS – POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

During this 6 month reporting period, have you from your own funds and on your own behalf either directly or through any other person, made any contributions of money or other things of value¹¹ in connection with an election to any political office, or in connection with any primary election, convention, or caucus held to select candidates for political office?

Yes No

If yes, furnish the following information:

Date	Amount or thing of value	Name of political organization	Name of candidate
------	--------------------------	--------------------------------	-------------------

^{10, 11} Things of value include but are not limited to gifts, interest free loans, expense free travel, favored stock purchases, exclusive rights, favored treatment over competitors, "kickbacks" and the like.

V - INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

16. During this 6 month reporting period, did you prepare, disseminate or cause to be disseminated any informational materials ¹²?
Yes No

IF YES, RESPOND TO THE REMAINING ITEMS IN SECTION V.

17. Identify each such foreign principal.

Alpine Tourist Commission

18. During this 6 month reporting period, has any foreign principal established a budget or allocated a specified sum of money to finance your activities in preparing or disseminating informational materials? Yes No

If yes, identify each such foreign principal, specify amount, and indicate for what period of time.

Alpine Tourist Commission (Touristische Gemeinschaft der Alpenlaender)
Zurich/Switzerland
Budget 2006: USD 550'000

19. During this 6 month reporting period, did your activities in preparing, disseminating or causing the dissemination of informational materials include the use of any of the following:

- Radio or TV broadcasts
- Magazine or newspaper articles
- Motion picture films
- Letters or telegrams
- Advertising campaigns
- Press releases
- Pamphlets or other publications
- Lectures or speeches
- Internet
- Other (specify) general public who asks for it

20. During this 6 month reporting period, did you disseminate or cause to be disseminated informational materials among any of the following groups:

- Public Officials
- Newspapers
- Libraries
- Legislators
- Editors
- Educational institutions
- Government agencies
- Civic groups or associations
- Nationality groups
- Other (specify) _____

21. What language was used in the informational materials:

- English
- Other (specify) _____

22. Did you file with the Registration Unit, U.S. Department of Justice a copy of each item of such informational materials disseminated or caused to be disseminated during this 6 month reporting period? Yes No

23. Did you label each item of such informational materials with the statement required by Section 4(b) of the Act? Yes No

12 The term informational materials includes any oral, visual, graphic, written, or pictorial information or matter of any kind, including that published by means of advertising, books, periodicals, newspapers, lectures, broadcasts, motion pictures, or any means or instrumentality of interstate or foreign commerce or otherwise. Informational materials disseminated by an agent of a foreign principal as part of an activity in itself exempt from registration, or an activity which by itself would not require registration, need not be filed pursuant to Section 4(b) of the Act.

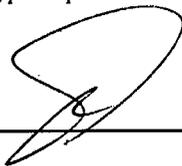
VI – EXECUTION

In accordance with 28 U.S.C. §1746, the undersigned swear(s) or affirm(s) under penalty of perjury that he/she has (they have) read the information set forth in this registration statement and the attached exhibits and that he/she is (they are) familiar with the contents thereof and that such contents are in their entirety true and accurate to the best of his/her (their) knowledge and belief, except that the undersigned make(s) no representation as to the truth or accuracy of the information contained in the attached Short Form Registration Statement(s), if any, insofar as such information is not within his/her (their) personal knowledge.

(Date of signature)

(Type or print name under each signature¹³)

October 16, 2006



Rafael Enzler

Chairman

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¹³ This statement shall be signed by the individual agent, if the registrant is an individual, or by a majority of those partners, officers, directors or persons performing similar functions, if the registrant is an organization, except that the organization can, by power of attorney, authorize one or more individuals to execute this statement on its behalf.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FARA REGISTRATION UNIT
CRIMINAL DIVISION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20530

NOTICE

Please answer the following questions and return this sheet in triplicate with your Supplemental Statement:

1. Is your answer to Item 16 of Section V (Informational Materials - page 8 of Form CRM-154, formerly Form OBD-64-Supplemental Statement):

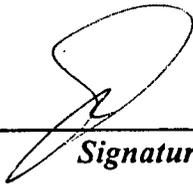
YES yes or NO _____

(If your answer to question 1 is "yes" do not answer question 2 of this form.)

2. Do you disseminate any material in connection with your registration:

YES _____ or NO _____

(If your answer to question 2 is "yes" please forward for our review copies of all material including: films, film catalogs, posters, brochures, press releases, etc. which you have disseminated during the past six months.)



Signature

October 16, 2006
Date

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Rafael Enzler

Please type or print name of
signatory on the line above

Chairman

Title



U.S. Department of Justice

Criminal Division

Washington, DC 20530

THIS FORM IS TO BE AN OFFICIAL ATTACHMENT TO YOUR CURRENT SUPPLEMENTAL STATEMENT -
PLEASE EXECUTE IN TRIPLICATE

SHORT-FORM REGISTRATION INFORMATION SHEET

SECTION A

The Department records list active short-form registration statements for the following persons of your organization filed on the date indicated by each name. If a person is not still functioning in the same capacity directly on behalf of the foreign principal, please show the date of termination.

Short Form List for Registrant: Alpine Tourist Commission

Last Name	First Name and Other Names	Registration Date	Termination Date	Role
Enzler	Raphael	07/27/2004		Chairman

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U.S. Department of Justice

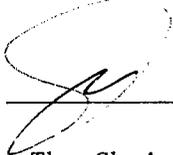
Criminal Division

Washington, DC 20530

SECTION B

In addition to those persons listed in Section A, list below all current employees rendering services directly on behalf of the foreign principals(s) who have not filed short-form registration statements. (Do not list clerks, secretaries, typists or employees in a similar or related capacity). If there is some question as to whether an employee has an obligation to file a short-form, please address a letter to the Registration Unit describing the activities and connection with the foreign principal.

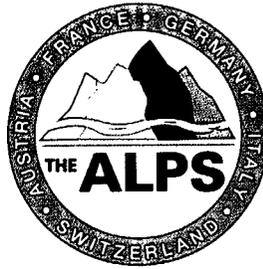
Name	Function	Date Hired
none		

Signature: 

Date: October 16, 2006

Title: The Chairman

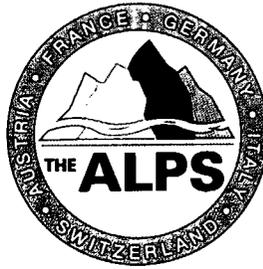
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Item 11 ACTIVITIES DURING THE 6 MONTH REPORTING PERIOD

Insert placement of advertisement in Ski Club Newsletter for consumers. Distribution of monthly e-newsletter to consumers and general public who asks for it. Advertisement in National Geographic Traveler May/June, August and September 2006 issues. Advertisement in Outside Traveler Magazine September 2006 issue. Advertisement in Outside Magazine in April, May and August 2006 issues. Destination targeted banner on Away.com in April, May and September 2006. Destination targeted banner on Google.com from April to September 2006. Destination targeted banner on NationalGeographic.com in April, May and September 2006. Destination targeted banner on IExplore.com in April 2006. Media Luncheon for journalists at the Jonathan Beach Club in Santa Monica/CA on July 12, 2006. Media Luncheon for journalists at the Old Mill In Restaurant in Toronto on July 28, 2006. Product presentation at the Mountain Travel Symposium in Lake Tahoe from April 2 – 8, 2006. Familiarization Press trip to Germany and Italy for journalists in cooperation with Swiss International Airlines and partners from the alpine countries in April 2006.

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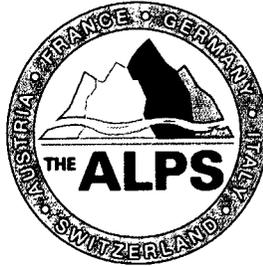


Item 11 of Supplemental Statement: Period April 1, 2006 - September 30, 2006

Promotional activities

Receptions and Presentations:

- August 28, 2006 Best of the Alps (BOTA) media luncheons for journalists and travel writers in Toronto (Canada) at the Guild Hall/Old Mill & in Seattle/WA at Hotel Vintage Park in cooperation with partners from the alpine countries.
- August 29, 2006 Best of the Alps (BOTA) media luncheons for journalists and travel writers in Dallas/TX at Hotel Crescent Court & in San Francisco/CA at Hotel JW Marriott in cooperation with partners from the alpine countries.
- August 30, 2006 Best of the Alps (BOTA) media luncheons for journalists and travel writers in Vancouver (Canada) at The William Tell Restaurant, in Los Angeles/CA at Hotel Sunset Boulevard & in New York/NY at the 212 Restaurant, in cooperation with partners from the alpine countries.
- August 29 - Sept. 1, 2006 Product presentation for the travel industry in Montreal (Canada), Toronto (Canada), Dallas/TX, Austin/TX, San Antonio/TX, Houston/TX, Boston/MA, New York/NY, Whiteplains/NY, Moonachie/NJ, Secaucus/NJ in cooperation with partners from the alpine countries.



Item 14 (a) RECEIPTS OF MONIES

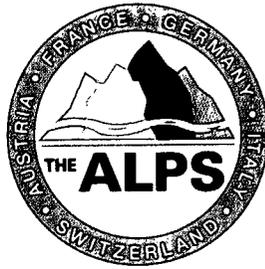
Date	From Whom	Purpose	Amount
04/10/06	Austrian National Tourist Office New York/NY	Part. Mountain Travel Symposium 04/06	995.00
04/10/06	Ski.com Denver/CO	Joint promotion	5'000.00
04/11/06	Unique Airport Zurich/Switzerland	Joint promotion	10'000.00
04/11/06	St. Moritz Tourism St. Moritz/Switzerland	Part. Mountain Travel Symposium 04/06	2'000.00
04/26/04	Rhone Alpes Tourisme Charbonnieres-les-bains/France	Part. Mountain Travel Symposium 04/06	2'000.00
04/26/04	Consorzio Dolomiti Belluno/Italy	Part. Mountain Travel Symposium 04/06	2'000.00
04/10/06	Austrian National Tourist Office New York/NY	Part. Mountain Travel Symposium 04/06	8'995.00
05/15/06	Int'l Tvl Communications Warren/NJ	Marketing campaign 1 st installment	6'413.25
07/05/06	Swiss Int'l Air Lines Zurich/Switzerland	Joint promotion	20'000.00
08/28/06	Headoffice Zurich/Switzerland	Current expenses	140'000.00
09/11/06	Interhome Inc. Miami/FL	Joint promotion	7'000.00
09/11/06	Picasso Travel Los Angeles/CA	Joint promotion	5'000.00
Total			209'403.25

September 30, 2006 RK



Item15 (a) DISBURSEMENTS OF MONIES

Date	To Whom	Purpose	Amount
04/01/06 – 09/30/06	Various	Office expenses, bank fees & postage charges	741.90
04/01/06 – 09/30/06	Helga Brenner-Kahn Flushing/NY	Newsletters, translations, fees and various expenses	7'000.00
04/01/06 – 09/30/06	The National Ski Club Newsletter, Englewood/CO	Adv. in Newsletter	6'000.00
04/10/06 – 09/30/06	Int'l Tvl Communications Warren/NJ	Fees Marketing Campaign	290'555.27
04/10/06 – 09/30/06	Staff Switzerland Tourism New York/NY	Travel Expenses	4'148.82
04/13/06	Taylor Kennedy Washington/DC	Reimbursement tvl expenses Press Trip 04/06	587.70
04/20/06	FARA reg. Unit, Washington/DC	Registration fee	305.00
05/15/06	Ben Davidson Fairfax/CA	Reimbursement tvl expenses Press Trip 04/06	59.84
05/18/06	Switzerland Tourism New York/NY	Reimbursement for deposit pmt The Old Mill Inn	1'601.59
06/12/06	Switzerland Tourism New York/NY	Participation fee for BOTA Sales Calls	2'500.00
07-08/06	Urban Office Products Brooklyn/NY	Office supplies for Media Event Los Angeles and Toronto	601.43
07/31/06	Pompilio Fabrizi Toronto/Canada	Reimbursement expenses Media Event Toronto	131.44
07/31/06	SATW Raleigh/NC	Membership fee Helga Brenner-Khan 10/06-11/07	250.00



08/09/06	Cralle Inc. Georgetown/Canada	Photographer fee for Media Event Toronto	175.00
08/09/06	IgoUgo, Inc. Chicago/IL	Website hosting & Management June/July/August 2006	5'250.00
08/16/06	Daniel E. Wolfus Los Angeles/CA	Reimbursement expenses Media Event Los Angeles	12'300.70
09/07/06	Jagro Air Services Valley Stream/NY	Import of brochures for Sales Calls	528.66
09/14/06	The Old Mill Inn Toronto/ON	Media Event	5'411.19
09/19/06	Austrian Tourist Office New York/NY	Reimbursement expenses Sales Calls	9'653.38
Total			347'801.92

September 30, 2006/RK

March-April 2006
Volume 19, Number 2

The

NATIONAL SKI CLUB

NEWSLETTER

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New Year's Eve in Salt Lake

Ski Nine Resorts While Based in the City

Schedule Your Next Trip Around an Event and/or Festival

Quebec City Based Ski Trip





Some skiers may ask, "What's Lech's claim to fame?" It's an Austrian powder-snow heaven with the advantages of a resort that evolved naturally. A century ago, 700-year-old Lech was a quiet farming village. Then came the vicar of Warth and wedged down the slopes of the Arlberg. Little did he know that this would change the course of history in the bucolic village. The ingenuity of its inhabitants, who trace their ancestry back to the Walsers, has turned Lech-Zürs into a skiing paradise and luxurious resort. Lech won an award as Europe's most beautiful village in 2004, and in 2006, Zürs will celebrate 100 years of lessons in schussing, telemarking and the stem turn.

Thanks to excellent snow conditions, world-class restaurants and elegant hotels, many of this Best of the Alps resort's guests are repeat visitors. Family-friendly Lech's American guests appreciate the warm hospitality and state-of-the-art facilities as well as the ski schools.

In the last five years, 50 million euros have been invested in lifts, snow-making equipment and mountain infrastructure. Today, 86 modern cable cars and lifts servicing 280 km of ski slopes and 180 km powder snow runs can be accessed with the Arlberg ski pass. Situated at 1,450 meters, Lech-Zürs extends over 90 square kilometers. Skiing takes place between 1,450 and 2,800 meters. The ski region -- Lech, Oberlech, Stubenbach, Zug and Zürs -- is famous for its deep powder snow. The electronic "Arlberg-Skicard" is also valid in St. Anton, Stuben and St. Christoph.

Lech's new six-person chairlift with protective bubble and heated seats replaces the Hexenboden lift. Skiers now check their speed in Oberlech on a schuss run. And on the new parallel slalom course, near the Hinterwies lift in Lech, guests feel they are in a downhill racer's paradise. Snowboarders show their skills in the Fun Park and Nordic skiers have 26 kilometers of cross-country tracks at their disposal. Nonskiers enjoy winter hiking trails, a natural toboggan run and romantic horse-drawn sleigh rides. Austria is still affordable, even in the Arlberg region. Accommodation ranges from cozy bed & breakfast places to five-star hotels. Ski in and ski out -- what could be more time-efficient? Vacation time is all too short, especially in a place like Lech-Zürs. For more information, see www.lech-zuers.at or www.austria.info.

Sanctuary Ski Club of Illinois Skis Chamonix

By Denis Dywan, Trip Leader

Given the 12,604 ft. altitude at Mount-Blanc in Chamonix, the highest mountain in Europe, we felt like we were on top of the world when we got off the cable car at Aiguille du Midi. The views are truly spectacular! The skiing in Chamonix was great! There was plenty of snow and the lines were short. Chamonix uses a "smart card," rather than a lift ticket and the lift cards cost us between 27 and 35 Euros -- far cheaper than skiing in the U.S.A.

On Tuesday, our guide took us on a tour of Annecy, and we had time to relax for lunch and sip wine along the river at outdoor cafes.

On Wednesday, 35 of our 43 participants signed up to go to Italy on our own bus. Half of us skied Courmayeur, Italy, and the rest ventured on to explore the historic Roman town of Aosta. Some even tried paragliding in the Alps -- in between pitchers of French wine! Several people hired guides to ski the 14-mile Vallee Blanche Glacier. Nearly everyone rode the cable car up to the Aiguille du Midi for awesome views of Mont-Blanc. We could see all the way to the Matterhorn. Most also rode the cog rail train to the Mer de Glace (River of Ice) where they walked into an ice cave dug into the Vallee Blanche glacier!

On Saturday, we boarded our bus for the three-hour trip through France to Lyon and, where we met our guide for a city tour. The tour gave us an overview of many of the highlights of Lyon and led us through secret passageways (traboules) in the old town. Our four-star hotel was located on an island surrounded by two rivers in the heart of Lyon. The nearby funicular took us up Fourviere Hill to a 15 B.C. Roman Amphitheater and the spectacular Notre Dame Basilica.



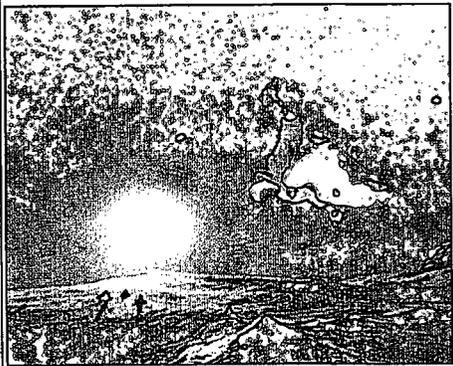
St. Moritz

Glittering Jewel of the Swiss Alps and Best of the Alps Resort

St. Moritz is the quintessential Swiss ski village and arguably the world's most famous resort. It was here that winter vacations were born. In 1864, the first winter tourists arrived on account of a bet between Johannes Badrutt, and British guests staying at his hotel. Snow sports enthusiasts from around the globe have flocked to this paradise in the Engadine Mountains ever since. Sixty modern transportation facilities open up on 350 km of snow-covered runs at altitudes from 1800 to 3300 meters above sea level. Kitesailing on Lake Silvaplana is one of the adrenaline-driven sports available to skiers in St. Moritz.

As an authentic resort that is preserving its traditions while introducing state-of-the-art facilities and infrastructure, St. Moritz is a member of the Best of the Alps group of twelve classic resorts strewn throughout the Alpine countries. St. Moritz is nestled at 1,800 meters in breathtaking scenery near the Italian border, presided over by Piz Nair and Piz Corvatsch. In the first millennium B.C the Celts roamed these mountains. In 1563 Paracelsus praised the local mineral springs. As early as 1884 the Cresta Run was built from St. Moritz to Celerina. This skeleton run is on many a winter visitor's "to-do" list.

Besides Badrutt's Palace, there are such eclectic five-star hotels as the Kulm, the Kempinski Grand Hotel Des Bain, or the Suvretta House nestling in the mountains. Today St. Moritz has a wide range of accommodations and skiers and snowboarders on a budget can opt to stay at chalets and budget hotels. Most important in this glamorous village is that special feeling of elation while schussing down the sunny slopes of Corviglia, cruising the Diavolezza glacier, or mastering the black-rated Hahnensee run on Corvatsch.



News About the Alps



Resort News

Garmisch-Partenkirchen

The latest attraction on Germany's tallest mountain: An igloo village atop the 10,000 ft Zugspitze. Enjoy the breathtaking vistas of four countries and spend a special night under ice and snow. Sleep in a group igloo or in a romantic suite! Eskimo artists built these igloos! Relax in an igloo whirlpool under the stars. Fortify yourself with an original gourmet Swiss Cheese Fondue. The igloos can be booked until the end of May.

Evening tobogganing is offered once again on the toboggan run at the Hausberg, one of the four mountains presiding over picturesque 1200-year Garmisch-Partenkirchen. On its terrace, Bayernhaus will serve mulled wine to the tobogganists. Indoors, in the cozy restaurant, hearty Bavarian cuisine and drinks are enjoyed, while a lively Bavarian band adds to the high spirits. On the same mountain, the International Ski Race for Guests will take place (various dates for both events). See www.garmisch-partenkirchen.de or www.cometogermany.com.

News about the Alps

St. Moritz: Snow and Symphony -- the perfect symbiosis of winter sports and classical music in the wintry Engadine. World-famous orchestras perform in elegant hotels and against the splendid backdrop of the Corvatsch and Corviglia. The festival begins at the end of March. www.stmoritzfestival.ch.

38th Engadine Ski Marathon. Traditional cross-country race, Maloja to S-chanf (42km), March 12, 2006.

Alta Badia: The starting point of fascinating ski tours in the Dolomites. Among the First World War Tours, Alta Badia's Santa Croce Tour stands out. Colfosco holds a hay sleigh competition on March 16, 2006. See www.altabadia.org.

Sellaronda Ski Marathon, March 3, 2006: Four Ladin valleys around the Sella massif will host the 12th edition of the international night touring ski competition around the Sella group of mountains. It extends for 42 kilometers and includes Arabba - Canazei - Selva - Corvara. Registration by February 6. Contact skiteamfassa@tin.it. See www.suedtirol.info or www.dolomitisuperski.com.

Lech-Zürs: Sun Skiing, a six-day package available March 25 to April 8, 2006, Arlberg ski pass included. Prices and reservation on request. Contact reservation@lech-zuers.at; Austrian Alpine Ski Championships, March 26 to 30, 2006. See www.lech-zuers.at.

For more information contact the ATC at www.alpseurope.com or:

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May-June 2006
Volume 19, Number 3

The
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NEWSLETTER

British Columbia's
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Rentagon Ski Club Does Utah's High Country
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Graubünden -- a Canton for All Seasons

By Helga Brenner



No less than 615 crystal-clear lakes and 150 lush green valleys surrounded by legendary mountains, such as Mt. Tödi with 3,614 meters, Piz Bernina with 4,048 meters as well as Albula, Silvretta and Rätikon ranges, are found in Graubünden, one of Switzerland's most sought-after vacation regions.

Spring and summer impart a special charm to this canton, which is home to the acclaimed Best of the Alps resorts, St. Moritz and Davos. Graubünden is located in eastern Switzerland and the resorts of Klosters, Davos, Arosa, St. Moritz, the Surselva Region, the Engadine and Valposchiavo are therefore easily reached from Zürich, the gateway to the Swiss Alps. In a few hours the comfortable red trains of the Rhaetian Railroad will take you to all these magical places. The romantic yellow postal bus will whisk you to Savognin and the Müstair valley, Lenzerheide, and the Mesolcina and Bregaglia valleys.

All year round, Graubünden is one of Switzerland's most sought-after vacation regions and arguably the favorite destination for families with children. After all, it is here that the magical places associated with Johanna Spyri's story of Heidi are found. Intimate, unexpected and warm-hearted Heidiland welcomes visitors into its midst. Marvelous hiking and biking tours for all age groups and levels of skill beckon. Start, for instance, in Sargans. You may want to order the hiking map online at www.heidiland.com and the Hiking Fun Pass (info@heidiland.com), which includes the free use of all mountain railways and the lake shipping services as well as one free trip daily on the summer toboggan run Kerenzerberg.

Visitors staying two nights in one of Heidiland's resorts such as Bad Ragaz, Flumserberg, Kerenzerberg and Amden, receive the Heidiland Card 2006, which entitles you to free use of the mountain trains, local transportation, and cruises on Lake Walen. It grants entrance to thermal pools such as the fabulous Tamina Terme in the spa village of Bad Ragaz, whose salubrious waters have attracted health-seekers and holidaymakers for centuries. World-famous spa hotels, such as Quellenhof are located here. Wonderful hiking trails let visitors discover the superb Alpine flora, for example, in Flumserberg. Along the ridge path Prodkamm- Maschgenkamm- Zigerfurglen, colored signposts indicate the specific alpine flowers and plants you pass on the trail. Weekly markets take place in Heidiland and indeed in all of the major resort of Graubünden. Picnic spots with barbecue stations, forest festivals, cooking and sculpture courses, as well as events for children add to the attractions of this delightful region. For more information, see www.MySwitzerland.com.

Sly Fox Ski Club Skis Val Gardena, Italy

By Sam Fontaine, Trip Leader

On January 21, Wisconsin's Sly Fox Ski Club arrived in Val Gardena, where our lift passes covered up to 450 lifts. Despite that fact, on the first day, most of us skied the immediate area. All around us were the spectacular Dolomite peaks with their sheer walls of golden limestone. It looked at times like we were skiing in the Grand Canyon!

The next day, many of us took off to ski the Sella Ronda, a famous circuit some twenty-five miles around the Sella Mountain, which rises just west of Val Gardena. You ski over four passes and through four valleys as you go around the huge mountain and we made it (without stopping for lunch until we got back into town) in three hours and 20 minutes!

Several members took a 3 hour bus trip to Bavaria's Neuschwanstein Castle that was built by "Mad" King Ludwig in the mid 1800's.

We skied several nearby ski areas including Alpe di Siusi (lots of blue cruisers), Col Raiser (which you get to on an underground train), and the famous run through Corvara to the Lagazuoi Valley -- which ends with a horse-drawn rope tow across a mile-long flat stretch!

Thursday, several of our participants took the bus to the city of Bolzano to see the famous 5,500 year-old "Ice Man" lying in his custom refrigerated room and all but nine of our participants continued on by train at the end of the ski trip to tour Rome -- where some members actually visited the Pope, and then all forty-four of our remaining participants toured St. Peter's Cathedral, the Spanish Steps, The Trevi Fountain, the Roman Forum, the Coliseum and the Pantheon. Then it was time to head home. Rome was great!



Skiing Pordoi in Italy's Sella Ronda.

Garmisch-Partenkirchen

Germany's Best of the Alps Resort

Garmisch-Partenkirchen, whose roots date back 1,200 years, is one of those legendary Alpine towns that have maintained their authenticity and Alpine ambiance, while offering state-of-the-art facilities that meet the high standards expected by today's traveler. This famous town in the Bavarian Alps is Germany's only member of the Best of the Alps group of resorts that dot the Alpine countries. It welcomes visitors from the United States with tempting packages and accommodation ranging from Bed & Breakfasts and simple inns to five-star hotels.

Visitors sense it right away: The promise of unforgettable vacations is in the air and a feeling of elation overcomes them as soon as they step out of the train, car, or coach. They are eager to explore the picturesque town with its time-honored nooks and crannies and hike the trails around the 10,000-foot Zugspitze, the Wank or Hausberg where in winter skiers and snowboarders prove their mettle and snowshoers leave their marks. The air is bracing and allergen-free - one of Garmisch-Partenkirchen's claims to fame. This is indeed a climatic spa town for all seasons. Nordic Walking is one of the most popular activities in spring and summer, but trekking and mountain biking are favorite spring and summer sports as well.

Garmisch-Partenkirchen is blessed also with picture-perfect Lake Eibsee, which lends itself to pleasurable lakeside walks, or to boat rides and water sports - in full view of the Zugspitze. The local mountain trains are renowned. For example, the glass-covered four-seat gondolas to the Wank, a fine vantage point. The magical gondola ride from the Loisach Valley to the summit takes 20 minutes; upon arrival a beautiful large sun terrace welcomes visitors at the Sonnenalm. The so-called terrain trails skirting the Wank do not involve steep ascents.

Accompanied by a local guide, hikers and trekkers looking for greater challenges will delight in a trek from the summit of the Zugspitze to the Austrian Tirol - through snow, a rocky area, meadows and a high altitude forest. Crossing the border in the mountains under your own power is definitely elating! For more information, see www.Garmisch-Partenkirchen.de; www.cometogermany.com.

News About the Alps

What's new in the Dolomites?

Alta Badia: This Dolomite region in Alto Adige/Südtirol consists of six villages whose popularity is constantly increasing. New this year: Work on the Val Badia road! The numerous guests from the United States who use the SS 49 Val Pusteria road, and therefore the SS 244 Val Badia road, to get to the villages in the Dolomites will find a new stretch of road between Montana and Longega. Tunnels have improved the traffic flow as well. Work on the Provincial Road of Pusteria, at the junction of Val Badia will also begin soon. The end of the work is foreseen for Christmas 2007.

For details, see www.dolomitisuperski.com/altabadia/images/statalevalbadia04.06.jpg.

Cortina d'Ampezzo: Italy's only Best of the Alps resort offers its hotel guests roundtrip transfers from Cortina to Venice Airport.

Families with children will rejoice: "Dolomiti Paradise" a new Children's Play Ground was opened in Cortina. For details, see www.cortina.dolomiti.com/home-en.html.

Val Gardena: New lifts and improvements include a detachable quad chairlift at Mont Sëura, a new "halfpipe" and "snowrafting" slope at Plan de Gralba, and the new underground railway, the Val Gardena Ronda Express, connecting the north and south variants of Val Gardena! For snowboarders, there is the Boarder Cross at Passo Sella, the Boarder Cross in the area Comici/Piz Sella, the Natural Half Pipe at the ski lift Sotsaslong, a Half Pipe on Alpe di Siusi, and a Fun Park for children on Alpe di Siusi, and a Half Pipe on Ciampino. For details, see www.val-gardena.com; www.italiantourism.com.

More News About the Alps

Graubünden Marathon: June 24, 2006, brutally difficult and incredibly beautiful: the toughest marathon in the world! See www.graubuenden-marathon.ch.

Walenstadt/Heidiland: From July 27 to August 26, 2006 "Heidi", the musical based on Johanna Spyri's life and the Heidi novel, will delight the young and young at heart in Walenstadt. Venue: the Lake Stage. www.Heidiland.com

St. Moritz: 13th British Classic Car Meet. July 14-16, 2006. Around 180 dream cars, Rolls-Royce, Bentley, Aston-Martin and Lagonda, Jaguar, Daimlers, Austin-Healey and Healey will meet. Participants drive over winding Alpine passes. See www.stmoritz.ch/.

Geneva: Musée Rath: Until August 6, 2006: Le Corbusier or the synthesis of the arts. Exhibition, in collaboration with the Fondation Le Corbusier in Paris. One of the most important events ever dedicated to Le Corbusier. See www.MySwitzerland.com.

Arosa: Half-Marathon Arosa - Weisshorn: August 20, 2006. See www.MySwitzerland.com.

Garmisch-Partenkirchen: July 7-9, 2006: 6th International BMW Motorcycle Biker Meeting. Tours on beautiful Alpine routess. Fantastic shows. Test drives with the latest BMW motorcycle models. For details, see www.bmw-motorrad.de/bikermeeting.

July 2-7: Richard-Strauss-Festival. International artists performing composers' works.

Schruns/Tschagguns: Silvretta Classic Rallye Montafon. June 29-July 2, 2006

Vienna: Baroque Cuisine (Mozart 2006): Until October 6, 2006

Haus der Musik presents culinary highlights of Mozart's time.

Salzburg: celebrates Mozart's 250th birthday throughout 2006.

2006 Salzburg Festival: July 23 - August 31, 2006. Mozart's entire music-theatrical oeuvre will be staged. www.austria.info/us

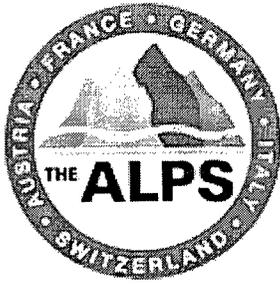
Verona: June 24th - August 26th. Arena de Verona 2006 Opera Season

Aosta Valley: Famous "Reines" battle (between cows) on the third Sunday of October.

For details, see www.regione.vda.it/turismo/tradition_bataille_e.asp

For more information contact the ATC at www.alpseurope.com or:

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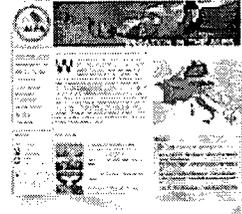


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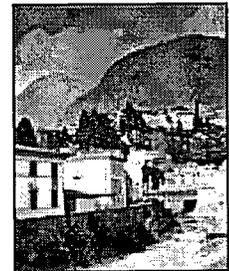
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5. [Spring and summer delights on France's Lake Annecy](#)

1. Myriad summer vacation options in the Italian Alps

Northern Italy is blessed with an extraordinary variety of Alpine landscapes, cultural experiences, cuisine, lakes, parks, flora and fauna. Whether it's Monte Bianco and Gran Paradiso National Park in the west, Lake Como, Maggiore and Garda, and Bormio with its ancient thermal springs in the center, or the Stelvio National Park and the Dolomites in the east, the possibilities for unforgettable vacations are endless. Spring and summer are the ideal time to explore Valcamonica's ancient heritage. Hike its two amazing parks, savor Lombardy's specialties and to stop at its spa resorts. Come and observe the capricorns, steinbocks and chamoix in the Stelvio National Park during July and August.



[Read More >>](#)

2. Exhilarating escapes into Austria's mountains

Could there be a more intimate experience of the mountain world than exploring it on foot? Austria with its scenic landscapes is ideal for close encounters and personal experiences in pristine nature. Centuries ago, the Austrians cut fantastic trails into the rocks, and for over one hundred years they have hiked the hills for



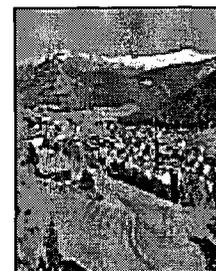
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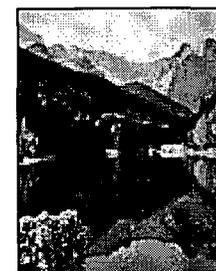
pleasure and fitness. If you are looking for pastoral sceneries, bracing mountain air, cool lakes - and budget-priced accommodation - come to Austria this summer. There are myriad options for memorable tours into the mountains and around the lakes. For example, visit the pristine village of Hallstatt, a World Heritage site presided over by the imposing Dachstein Mountain, where ice caves and salt mines beckon. Or discover lovely Alpbach, "Europe's Flower Village". Whether you stay in a cozy chalet-style inn, mountain hut, or luxury hotel, a visit to Austria is the stuff memories are made of.

**[Read More >>](#)****3. Switzerland's resorts beckon with great summer offerings**

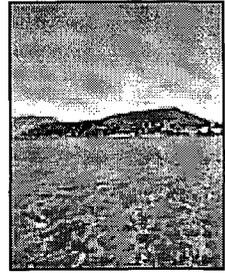
Now it's easier than ever to get to Switzerland. SWISS has introduced an additional service from New York's JFK Airport to Zürich, operating six days a week. You will arrive well rested in the Swiss gateway to the Alps. The canton of Graubünden, easily reached from Zürich, is one of Switzerland's most popular vacation regions. One of its most famous towns, Davos, has a truly unique offer for its guests this summer: Unlimited free travel on all mountain trains and cableways! Many other services are also free of charge. In July events such as the Davos Jazz Festival and the Swiss Alpine Marathon beckon. Bad Ragaz, the spa resort blessed with the Tamina Spring's salubrious waters, is another one of Graubünden's jewels. It is hosting its third Sculpture Triennale this summer, exhibiting in public places the works of 80 outstanding sculptors from all over the world.

**[Read More >>](#)****4. Garmisch-Partenkirchen - a paradise for outdoor activities**

At the foot of Zugspitze, Germany's highest peak, Garmisch-Partenkirchen beckons with spring and summer offers. This 1200-year-old town offers not only authentic Alpine charm but also the most modern facilities. The promise of enjoyable and restorative vacations is in the air as soon as you step out of the train or car after the short ride from Munich. The bracing air is pollen-free, a fact that contributed to the resort's fame as a climatic health resort. About one mile from the center you will find Lake Riessersee. On this lovely lake, the luxurious Renaissance Hotel offers you a relaxing stay in full view of the 10,000-ft Zugspitze. Check out its offerings and excellent prices.

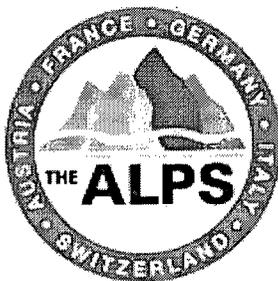
**[Read More >>](#)****5. Summer Delights on France's Lake Annecy**

Boasting the purest water in Europe, this large lake in France's Rhône-Alpes is a desirable destination for a summer vacation or weekend get-away. Only about 25 miles from Geneva's Airport, the fine heritage of its Haute Savoie villages and lakeside hiking and biking tours beckon. Hotel Les Tresoms Lake and Spa Resort in Annecy offers attractive packages, including a food lovers' tour and a bike tour in the mountains. Enjoy whitewater thrills, savor a romantic dinner-dance cruise, or escape to a charming mountain village such as Grand Bornand. Find out more about great deals on Lake Annecy and the nearby Aravis Mountains.



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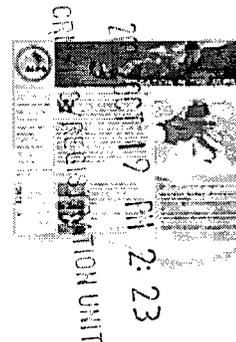
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1. Switzerland's infinite variety - revealed in great cities and authentic villages

This lovely Alpine republic has it all: Some of the world's most spectacular mountain scenery. Glacial lakes glittering like sapphires. Luxurious spa resorts. Remote villages where time stands still - and which can only be reached on foot or by the intrepid drivers of the yellow PostBus, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. Time-honored customs exist side by side with state-of-the-art facilities and a cutting-edge art scene in cosmopolitan Swiss cities. Traditional hospitality arising out of centuries of welcoming and sheltering travelers from east and west, north and south on mountain passes hewn by the earliest settlers into the Alpine rocks. Climate zones ranging from the palm-tree studded canton of Ticino to the eternal ice of the Jungfrau-Aletsch-Bietschhorn Region, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is only natural that the visitor feels invigorated and inspired - even after only a short stay in Switzerland.



Graubünden
 Swiss mountains and
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2. Holidays in Heiligenblut - an insider tips for your summer visit to Austria 2006

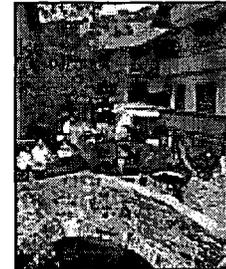
Summer is a wonderful time to discover the picturesque resort of Heiligenblut, nestled at the foot of Grossglockner, Austria's tallest mountain. Located in Austria's southwestern province of Carinthia, Heiligenblut is waiting to be discovered by the greater American mountain biking and hiking public. It is not only a starting point of biking tours into the Hohe Tauern Range, but also of walks along the Golden Trail, where you can retrace the footsteps of early gold diggers along the banks of the Möll River. Heiligenblut's 15th Century Gothic Church is a revered pilgrimage site. Don't miss a visit to Klagenfurt, the provincial capital and cultural center. It is a Renaissance jewel on one of Austria's most romantic lakes, Wörthersee. See images and check out the fun summer packages 2006!



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3. Megève - French mountain resort beckons with ambiance and modern comforts

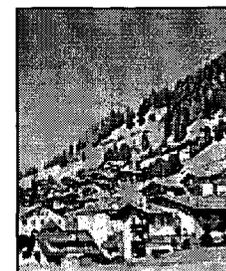
Marvelous Megève, in the eastern part of France's Rhone-Alpes, is one of those unforgettable mountain villages that have become members the distinctive "Best of the Alps" resorts. Located only 42 miles from Geneva airport, it is an ideal vacation destination both in summer and in winter. Its scenery, authentic ambiance, and proximity to Chamonix - Mont Blanc, combined with state-of-the-art facilities and modern comforts, have spread its fame far beyond the French borders. Come and spend a few days or weeks this year in the Haute-Savoie village and bring back unforgettable memories - you will want to come back for more...



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4. The Dolomites - a breathtaking Alpine arena and natural fitness center

The bizarre rock formations in Trentino - Alto Adige/Südtirol, and in Veneto, have attracted painters, poets, and nature lovers ever since Déodat de Dolomieu, the 18th century French geologist, explored the special rocks found in the Northern Italian Alps. In his honor, these rock formations have been called Dolomites. The jagged cliffs and finger-like spires have attracted climbers and fitness enthusiasts for decades. Countless travel reports about the Dolomites' beauty and cultural, linguistic, and culinary diversity, and such famous films as "Cliffhanger", have added to the reputation of the region as a vacation paradise. Summer is a great time to visit the valleys, villages, mountains, "rifugi", and lakes of the Dolomites. Alta Badia, Bolzano,



Cortina beckon...

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5. The scenic and cultural treasures of the German Alps - accessible and affordable

Bavaria, in Germany's south, is blessed with the country's Alpine region. Visitors arriving by air in Munich or Stuttgart have a wide range of options to access the mountains: by train, car, or bus. Both cities are cultural centers with world-class music festivals, outstanding museums, accommodation for every budget, and gourmet restaurants. The picturesque mountain resorts are distributed all over the German Alps and many are found along the German Alpine Road, which in some instances skirts the Austrian border. Come to the German Alps this summer: you will find your visit rewarding and affordable. Start by taking a virtual tour of some of Bavaria's historic towns, lovely villages, and spa resorts...



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CONTACT INFORMATION

For information on the Alps, please visit www.alpseurope.com
For additional information on the member countries of the Alpine Tourist Commission (ATC), please contact the individual tourist offices:

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www.austria.info/us. **New address:** AUSTRIAN TOURIST OFFICE; 120 West 45th Street, 9th floor; New York, NY 10036

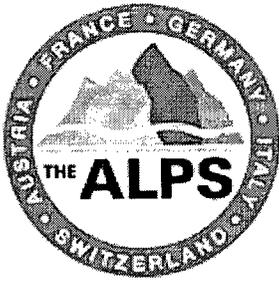
French Government Tourist Office/Maison de la France, Tel: (212) 745-0963/67, Fax: (212) 838-7855, 444 Madison Avenue, 16th floor, New York, NY 10022; press.us@franceguide.com; www.franceguide.com/us

German National Tourist Office, Tel. (212) 661-7200, Fax (212) 661-7174, Toll Free number: 1-800-651-7010; 122 East 42nd Street, Chanin Bldg., 20th Floor, New York, NY 10168-0072; gntonyc@d-z-t.com;
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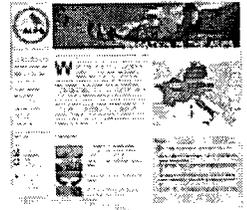


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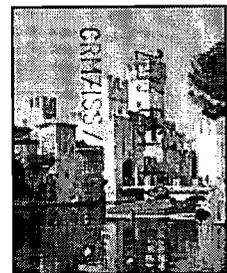


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1. Northern Italy - Lovely Lakes and Majestic Mountains

Lombardy is blessed with five of Europe's largest and most fascinating pre-alpine lakes. Visitors from the United States have flocked in particular to the three most famous lakes: **Lake Maggiore** is surrounded by Lombardy to the east and Piedmont to the west. The northern part extends into Switzerland. Although Lake Maggiore is of glacial origin - like all lakes in the Alps and its foothills - its climate is mild and ideal for the growth of lush Mediterranean vegetation. **Lake Garda** is a heaven for tourists from colder climates. Beautiful villas dot the lakeside, and the water's blue color is contrasted by the green hills covered with olive trees. **Lake Como** boasts a cultural history dating back over two millennia. The Celts and the Romans settled here. Today, splendid parks and picturesque towns and resorts along the shore offer the best in hospitality and cuisine. The atmosphere is heavenly. Come and relax under palm trees, take a cruise and hike in the nearby hills. Visitors can experience a change of scenery in a matter of hours for the snow-capped Alps are within easy reach.



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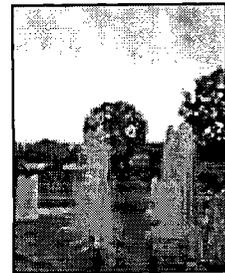
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2. Summer delights in France's Rhône-Alpes

The Rhône-Alpes have it all - mountains, rivers, lakes and world-class cities. You can combine a vacation, for example, in the great outdoors of the Mont Blanc or in great natural parks like Parc du Pilat, Parc de la Vanoise with the cultural offerings of such marvelous cities as **Lyon**, where the Rhône and Saône rivers converge, or **Grenoble**, at the confluence of the Isère and Dore. What could be more refreshing in the summer months than enjoying the rivers, lakes and gorges of the French Alps? Whether it's swimming, paddling, canoeing and white water rafting, or just relaxing in the mineral waters of one of France's celebrated spa resorts.



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3. Vacation paradises in the heart of Austria: Tirol and Styria

Tirol with its magnificent scenery, quaint villages, traditional hospitality and chalet-style architecture exudes irresistible charm. Many a visitor from the United States has fallen in love with this dream destination. It therefore comes as no surprise that Tirol has so many repeat visitors. From the distinctive resorts of **St. Anton** and **Kitzbuehel** to the **Hohe Tauern National Park** with Grossglockner, Austria's highest mountain, and to the **Ötztal Valley** with its fantastic package deals, Tirol is an excellent vacation choice this summer and fall.



Styria is another wonderful vacation region - in both the summer and winter months. The region's budget-priced packages are still an insider tip. Among Styria's well-known resorts are **Schladming-Rohrmoos** with its mountain bike trails, **Ramsau** nestled beneath the Dachstein Mountain, and the fabulous state-of-the-art spa resort of **Bad Blumau**.

Find out more about Tirol's and Styria's amazing offerings...

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4. Cool Summer Adventures in Switzerland

When it comes to topographic variety, climate zones and cultural diversity, Switzerland is unique in Europe. A myriad of experiences await you - from exploring the breathtaking heights of **Monte Rosa** to biking along the shores of **Lake Constance**; from the **Aletsch Glacier** to the palm trees of **Locarno**; from the rope park and dragon caves on **Mt. Pilatus** to the culinary delights of the grottoes in **Ticino**. All of Switzerland's regions are easily accessible by such scenic trains such as the **Glacier Express**, the border-crossing **Palm Express** and **Lötschberg-Centovalli Express**, the **William Tell** or **Mont Blanc Express**. And wherever trains don't stop, the yellow **PostBus** will take you through the spectacular mountain world in comfort. What could be cooler than taking a glacier hiking tour? Or perhaps you

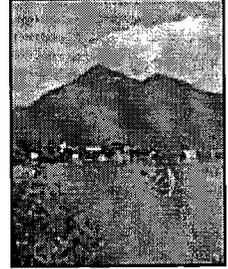


would like to retrace the footsteps of mule traders in the **Wildstrubel Massif**, attend a festival in Interlaken, or attend the bike marathon in **Scuol**? The possibilities are endless.

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5. Bavaria beckons with lakes, mountains and the Oktoberfest

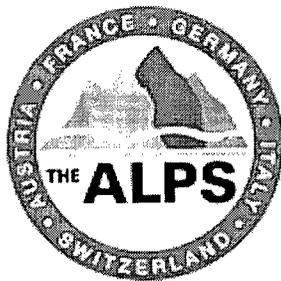
The scenic landscape of Bavaria is not only dotted with romantic cities and picture-perfect villages, but it is also home to enchanting lakes. One of these lakes is the emerald-green **Tegernsee**, where traditions are kept alive. Women proudly wear their beautiful and festive costumes, and folklore events, evoking country life of a bygone time, are celebrated in the villages.



Munich, the gateway to the German Alps, will host its 173rd Oktoberfest from September 16th to October 3rd. Get the best rates now! Book early to avoid disappointment. Only an hour's ride from Munich, **Garmisch-Partenkirchen** is calling all outdoor enthusiasts. This charming resort's well-trained staff is eager to show you the latest Nordic Walking techniques and to lure you to King Ludwig's hunting lodge...

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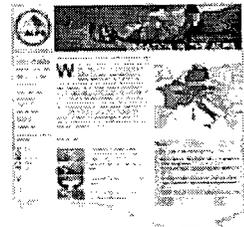


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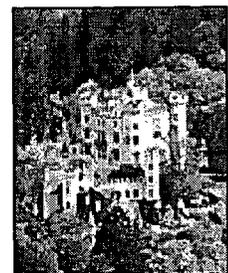
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1. Discovering Bavaria's Treasures

Traveling to Bavaria is particularly pleasant in fall, when the hot summer days are only a memory and winter is still months away. Home to the German Alps, Bavaria has it all - glorious nature, pure, allergen-free air and a natural, healthy way of life - all this being reflected in the children's ruddy cheeks whose glow seems to compete with the apples growing in the orchard behind your hotel. Hiking and biking paths circle romantic lakes and crisscross magical forests. They link picturesque, historic towns with quaint villages where time-honored customs continue to be celebrated. In **Murnau am Staffelsee**, a cultural and scenic highlight on the Romantic Road, the fantastic scenery and atmosphere inspired the Blue Rider group to create Expressionist masterpieces. The town is close to Munich, whose atmosphere and quality of life has long been a magnet for American visitors. Its cultural scene, acclaimed museums like the Neue and Alte Pinakothek, unique markets and fairs like the Viktualienmarkt and Auer Dult, as well as legendary restaurants make Munich the ideal starting point for a visit to the Bavarian Alps.

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2. Austria's National Parks: Nature at its Best

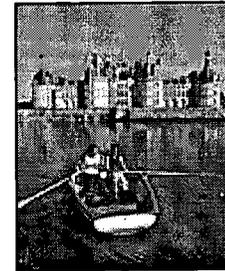
If you are looking for nature's original, unpolluted state, come to one of Austria's six national parks. Hohe Tauern National Park is the park best known to visitors from the United States and beyond. After all, it is shared by Carinthia, Salzburg and Tirol and is home to Austria's tallest mountain, Grossglockner. At Hohe Tauern you will come face to face with Austria's spectacular scenic beauty: a variety of landscapes, mountain torrents gushing through gorges, and a wealth of flora and fauna. Discover the mythical Via Aurea, or Gold Road, on foot or horseback. Get pampered in the spa resort of Bad Gastein, one of the towns on the Gold Road. Enjoy the cultural treasures of Salzburg in the Mozart Year 2006 and avail yourself of the amazing package deals.



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3. The Grandeur of Savoie in the Rhône-Alpes

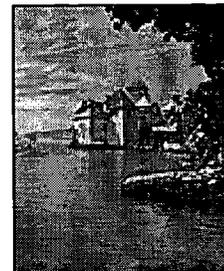
The very names of **Courchevel, Meribel, La Tania, Tigne or Val d'Isère** spell magic. Although well known to skiers from the United States, these lovely villages in the Savoie Mountains are waiting to be discovered by you and your family in fall, when the leaves turn to burnished gold, and before skiers hit the slopes in late November. The Tarantaise Mountains, the Vanoise National Park, and the mountainous province of Maurienne provide open spaces and pristine air. This spectacular region is replete with breathtaking views, charming villages and protected valleys that can be explored via the Alpine passes that are a major challenge in the Tour de France every year. Come and discover these famous panoramas at your own pace. Don't miss the art created by local artists on the Baroque Paths. There are myriad sites to be admired: The sanctuaries in Pesiey-Nancrois and Saint-Martin-de-Belleville in the Tarantaise, or the St. Thomas-Becket church of Avrieux and Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption in the Maurienne region.



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4. Lake Geneva Region - four different worlds

Looking for contrasts and inspiration? Come to the Lake Geneva Region! Mountains and lakes, rural life and world-famous cities - four completely different worlds can be discovered here side by side. Pine trees and palms, cosmopolitan cities and quaint mountain villages, verdant vineyards and stunning castles are waiting to be explored this fall. Geneva's Cointrin Airport is your gateway. Explore this wonderful, city on foot. Relax on the shore of Lake Geneva and admire the Jet d'Eau, Europe's highest fountain. Take a cruise on a paddle steamer to Montreux. Visit the stunning Castle of Chillon. Interested in traditions? Craftsmen still produce

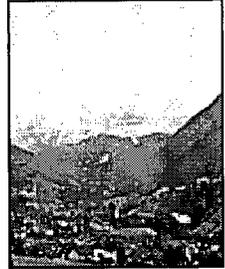


the famous music boxes in St. Croix. Bring some home as treasured souvenirs. Stop over in Château-d'Œx, the hot-air balloon capital of the Alps. Hike the vineyards bordering Lake Geneva and taste the region's incomparable wines. The regional cuisine is among the best in the Alps. In the Lake Geneva Region you are spoilt for choice.

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5. Italy's Alto Adige - A Pampering Paradise

Wherever you stay in Alto Adige/Südtirol, your hosts will roll out the red carpet for you and your family. Whether it's in historic cities like Bolzano or Merano, or in the small towns and villages of the region, the local people's friendliness and love of life is palpable everywhere. Several cultural influences come into play here. Besides Italian, the local population speaks Ladin, a dialect derived from Latin. German is also widely spoken. Marvelous hotels make visitors from the United States and beyond feel at home. Alta Badia, a high valley consisting of several valleys, spares no effort to make visitors feel at home. Its gourmet restaurants have garnered praise far beyond the Italian borders. Although this region in the Dolomites is a skiing paradise in winter, it has much to offer in autumn as well. Golfing is one of the many sports pursued here during the fall season. Hiking tours with interesting themes are offered throughout the region.



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In summer, fairs add nostalgic magic. But the produce of summer (below) is a year-round pleasure.

[Weekend]

Lebanon County, Pa.

The Lancaster County alternative, this nearby stretch of land has it all, except the crowds. **By Sally Eckhoff**

It's long been understood that if you want to see Amish farming in its most exquisite setting, Pennsylvania's lush Lancaster County is the place to visit. Indeed, popularity isn't necessarily a blessing for a community firmly founded on separateness from the "Englischer" world.

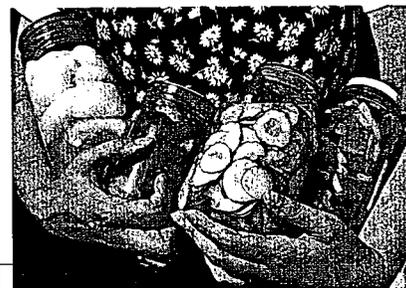
Indeed, when land prices in Lancaster started zooming, many Amish pulled up stakes and moved away—but not too far. Just across Lancaster's upper county line sits Lebanon County, which, though not nearly as famous as its next-door neighbor, is the place I chose to experience the authentic day-to-day life of a steadfastly rural community.

On a recent road trip, Route 501 yielded some arresting sights as I meandered north. Massive caramel-colored Belgian draft horses towed a crop sprayer; a boy no older than 12 piloted four mules abreast. A stone barn with barred windows seemed to burrow into a thick wheat field the

color of a dome on a Russian church. A woman in a teal blue dress and a red scarf slowly made her way across a courtyard toward her children swarming around a grape arbor. A particularly large mule seemed to be peering at something in the distance, almost as if he were watching his winning Lotto numbers come up on a TV screen.

Amish businesses tend to cluster near important thoroughfares, so shunning the pike can have its inconveniences if you're looking for modern retail experiences. Let's just say that tiny farms by the roadside offer soothing vistas in lieu of goods.

In Schaefferstown and Reistville, especially (both are on Route 501),



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVELER

May/June issue

have since collaborated on projects like Tibet House, the cause célèbre of glitterati like Christy Turlington, David Bowie, Iman, and, of course, Uma.

Anyone who's seen the younger Thurman's hit portrayal of an avenging samurai badass might think her interest in Buddhism is a little contradictory. But Tenzin Bob disagrees. "My take on *Kill Bill*?" he says. "I hated the violence, but Uma is like a subliminal Kali icon," a symbol of the Hindu goddess of destruction. "That's why she's so popular in Asia."

THE STAR IN THIMPHU a few days later is Thurman himself, who's slated to meet with students and dignitaries for a discussion about gross national happiness, followed by dinner with Bhutan's best and brightest. The whole entourage is invited. But first we head downtown to support the economy.

A mountain-wrapped city of 55,000 along the banks of a river, Thimphu is the only national capital on earth without a traffic light. The buildings, trimmed with latticework, give off a Swiss vibe, and the shops have suspiciously Western names, like the Buzz Club and U.S. Enterprises. There's no shortage of Internet cafés, either.

"Thimphu is looking grotty," Brent Olson says, as we pass gangs of dogs and a crew of workers manually raising a streetlamp.

He has a point: After the stillness of the countryside, the cacophony of dogs barking, horns honking, and jackhammers hammering is overwhelming. And everywhere, people are shopping—for high heels, for a 50-gallon plastic rain barrel, for an entertaining read like *The Da Vinci Code* (displayed in English in a bookstore window). Of course, everyone in our group is shopping for made-in-Bhutan *kiras* and *ghos*.

The only souvenir I want is a hand-sculpted clay Buddha from the local crafts school we just toured. But they aren't for sale. And then it hits me—for two weeks I've been surrounded by paintings, statues, and drawings of divine beings, from mustached Guru Rinpoches to Milarepas (a skinny saint from Tibet) and every other possible manifestation of enlightened ones. Their visages appear in temples, on truck dashboards, and carved into rock faces in so many incarnations that I've started taking them for granted—just as I've started taking the companionship of my fellow psychonauts for granted.

And now, after meditating jointly on death and selflessness—and after sharing the last 42 meals together, eating things like wild boar and topping it off with an excess of Dragon Warmers—we'll disperse to all corners of the globe. Some of us will have found serenity, others will keep trying to muscle their way to it, and some just won't get it. I'm wavering in the middle, but at least tenet 18 in "The Way of Purification" from *The Teaching of Buddha* has become crystal clear to me: It is hard to attain a peaceful mind. Or, as it occurred to me at the confluence of the Paro and Thimphu rivers, I can either drive myself mad trying to distinguish where one river begins and the other ends, or I can let myself be mesmerized by the raucous crash they make as they flow downstream as one.

At the festivities a few hours later, Thurman is in exquisite form. He works the crowd like a Buddhist Seinfeld ("Nirvana is that which one seeks through orgasm and death!") and then launches into a heartfelt plea for Buddhist education. Teaching traditional spiritual values, he says, is the best way to maintain the country's identity at its most crucial turning point, when it could go the way of isolationism and risk poverty and despair or go the way of globalization and risk being consumed by the beast of Western values.

At dinner, I sit near Chencho Dorji, Bhutan's only practicing psychiatrist; his clientele's number-one disorder is anxiety, a result, he says, of fast-paced lifestyle changes. Across the table is Tshewang Dendup, the scruffily handsome actor who starred in the 2003 movie *Travelers and Magicians*, the first feature film shot entirely in Bhutan. Ironically, he plays the character who is desperately trying to leave Bhutan and get to America, the land of his dreams.

It seems that even Buddhists, the masters of finding nirvana in the here and now, can't always overcome the urge to search elsewhere. But when I ask Dendup, who is currently making his living as a cameraman for Bhutan's sole television station, why he's not heading to Hollywood, he laughs, then sets me straight. "Why would anyone want to go there?" □

Senior editor **STEPHANIE PEARSON** wrote about New Zealand in September 2004.



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